

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Reply, claims 1-18 will remain in this application. New claims 19-26 have been added. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claim 1 is amended above to remove an informality.

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), based on U.S. Patent 1,253,927 to Bradshaw, is requested.

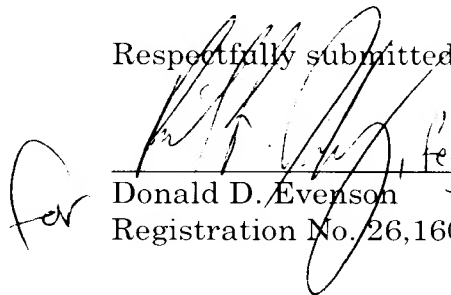
The Bradshaw patent fails to disclose or suggest a tank for receiving a carbon- and hydrogen- containing fluid for supplying a fuel cell system with an operating medium as claim 1 presently defines. Particular features of fuel cell systems are discussed, for example, in lines 11-16 on page 1 of the specification of this application. The Bradshaw patent also fails to disclose or suggest a carbon- and hydrogen- containing fluid cleaning method comprising feeding fluid as recited, thereby removing at least one constituent as amended claim 14 defines. The Bradshaw patent is, instead, concerned with a strainer for gasoline tanks including a screen 15, which removes solid matter and water, and a strainer 18, which separates large foreign matter, from gasoline supplied to a conventional gasoline tank. The Bradshaw patent has nothing to do with a fuel cell system as defined by claim 1, and the foreign matter, solid matter, and water removed by screen 15 and strainer 19 of the Bradshaw device are not constituents of the carbon- and hydrogen- containing fluid defined by amended claim 14. Independent claims 1 and 14 are patentable over the Bradshaw patent relied on.

Dependent claims 2-13 and 15-18 are patentable as well. It should be noted, in particular, that the Bradshaw patent does not disclose or suggest making a tank comprising a composite body having at least two zones of different permeability, and fails to teach or suggest the claimed materials or claimed constituents that must be removed from a carbon- and hydrogen- containing fluid.

This application is now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions after considering this Reply, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the claims appearing below, deletions are bracketed and additions are underlined.

1. (Amended) A tank for receiving a carbon- and hydrogen-containing fluid for supplying a fuel cell system with an operating medium, comprising:

[a tank having] an inlet and an outlet for the fluid;

at least one straining means for cleaning the fluid arranged between the inlet and the outlet.

14. (Amended) A method for cleaning a carbon- and hydrogen-containing fluid comprising feeding the fluid through a tank having at least one straining means for cleaning the fluid arranged between an inlet and an outlet, thereby removing at least one constituent.